

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the pending application is respectfully requested on the basis of the following particulars:

In the claims

Claims 13, 34, and 37 have been canceled; and new claims 38-41 are added.

Claim objections

Claim 34 is presently objected to for certain informalities. Applicant respectfully submits that cancellation of claims 13, 34, and 37 renders the objection moot.

Rejection of claims 13, 34, and 37 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 13, 34, and 37 presently stand rejected as being anticipated by Loughlin (U.S. 2004/0226324). This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

New claims 38-41 are added, replacing claims 13, 34, and 37, wherein new claims 38-41 more clearly point out the presently claimed invention as clearly supported by Applicant's provisional Application No. 60/443,331 filed on January 29, 2003 (hereinafter referred to as the '331 Provisional Application), to which the present application claims priority.

Applicant notes that the '331 Provisional Application was filed on January 29, 2003, well prior to the earliest reference date of Loughlin.

It is respectfully submitted that all of the features defined in the new claims 38-41 are fully supported not only by the present application but additionally by Figs. 5-8 of the '331 Provisional Application.

These claims and figures indicate that the invention of the subject Application is generally directed to a padlock, comprising a lock body (FIG. 5, A+B), a shackle (I), a confining block (C) and a numeral wheel set. The shackle (I) has a longer arm movably

received in the lock body (FIG. 7) and a shorter arm extending outside of the lock body from the longer arm (FIG. 7 or 8). The shorter arm is rotatable about the longer arm (FIGS. 7 and 8). The confining block (C) includes a block portion and a cylindrical portion extending from a bottom of the block portion. The block portion is rotatably disposed outside the lock body (FIGS. 7 and 8) and defines a receptacle therein for receiving the shorter arm of the shackle (FIG. 5 or 7). The cylindrical portion is disposed inside the lock body and is rotatable with the block portion simultaneously (FIGS. 7 and 8).

When the block portion rotates from a first position (FIG. 7) to a second position (FIG. 8), the shorter arm of the shackle (I) remains staying in the receptacle of the block portion. At this time, the shorter arm of the shackle (I) is allowed to be rotated by a user about the longer arm of the shackle (I) to be withdrawn from the receptacle (as shown in FIG. 8).

The numeral wheel set is disposed in the lock body and includes a shaft (E), a plurality of inner sleeves (Fa, Fb) and a plurality of digit-wheels (G). The shaft (E) of the numeral wheel set is parallel with the cylindrical portion of the confining block (C). The inner sleeves (Fa, Fb) are in parallel with one another and are placed around the shaft (E). Each of the digit-wheels (G) is mounted around a respective one of the inner sleeves (Fa, Fb).

In particular, the receptacle of the block portion includes a first opening defined in a top of the block portion and a second opening defined in a side of the block portion (FIG. 5). The first and second openings are in communication with each other in such a way that when the block portion rotates to the second position, the shorter arm of the shackle is allowed to be rotated about the longer arm of the shackle for entrance into or withdrawal from the receptacle of the blocking portion via the second opening (FIG. 8).

It is respectfully submitted that, since the '331 Provisional Application does in fact support all features claimed in Claims 38-41, and has a filing date prior to the Loughlin

reference, the rejection based on Loughlin cannot be maintained. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

It is respectfully submitted that the Loughlin reference or the Fleming et al reference does not provide a sufficient basis for rejection of the pending pertinent Claims.

For at least these reasons, the withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejection of claims 13, 34, and 37 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 13, 34, and 37 presently stand rejected as being unpatentable over Loughlin in view of Fleming et al. (U.S. 4,876,866). This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Double patenting rejections

Claims 13, 34, and 37 are presently rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting, in view claims of U.S. Patent No. 7,370,497, U.S. Patent No. 7,114,356, U.S. Patent No. 7,100,401, and U.S. Patent No. 7,204,108, and provisionally in view of copending applications 12/073,912, 11/503,989, 11/491,258, and 11/272,709. It is respectfully submitted that cancellation of claims 13, 34, and 37 renders these rejections moot. Further, Applicant notes that the present application claims and is entitled to the priority of the '331 Provisional Application, which fully supports the present claims.

Conclusion

Every effort has been made to place the application fully in condition for allowance, and to remove all issues raised by the Examiner in the Official Action.

In view of the amendments to the claims, and in further view of the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is requested that claims 38-41 be allowed and the application be passed to issue.

Response to Office Action of October 17, 2008
Application No.: 0/671,659
Examiner: Lloyd A. GALL
Art Unit: 3673

If any issues remain that may be resolved by a telephone or facsimile communication with the Applicant's attorney, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the numbers shown.

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John R. Schaeffer", written in a cursive style.

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